

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



City of Liberty Lake Comprehensive Plan

What is the GMA and how does it affect the City of Liberty Lake?

The Growth Management Act was established in the State of Washington in 1990 to provide a framework for land use planning and development regulation. Rapid population growth in the late 80s and early 90s made planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) mandatory for Spokane County and its cities in 1993. GMA comprehensive plans for each jurisdiction within the County are required to accommodate a proportionate share of the state's projected 20-year population growth. Since the City of Liberty Lake is a new city within Spokane County we are required to develop a comprehensive plan and implementation regulations that are compliant with the Growth Management Act (GMA). Our plan must include elements addressing land use, transportation, housing, utilities, essential public facilities, and capital facilities. In addition to the mandatory elements, the City of Liberty Lake has also chosen to include optional elements addressing urban design & community character, economic development, parks, recreation & open space, natural environment, cultural & historical resources, and community & human services. The plan elements must be consistent with one another and the GMA.

The following planning goals are outlined in RCW 36.70A to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations. Additionally, the City of Liberty Lake must follow the Countywide Planning Policies for Spokane County as a guide to comprehensive plan adoption and the establishment of urban growth areas (UGA's).

1. Urban Growth - Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
2. Reduce sprawl - Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
3. Transportation - Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.
4. Housing - Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.
5. Economic development - Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
6. Property rights - Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
7. Permits - Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
8. Natural resource industries - Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
9. Open space and recreation - Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.
10. Environment - Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

11. Citizen participation and coordination - Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.
12. Public facilities and services - Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.
13. Historic preservation - Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.
14. Shorelines - Utilize the goals and policies of the Shoreline Management Act, as set forth in RCW 90.58.020, for shorelines of the state.

What is the purpose of Comprehensive Plans?

The Comprehensive Plan is a set of goals, policies, maps, images, and strategies that delineate how the City of Liberty Lake should grow physically, socially, and economically. The plan emphasizes innovative strategies to guide growth and development. The residents of the City of Liberty Lake have developed element vision statements that outline what the future of the City will be. Our future will include a distinct core to our City, an aesthetically pleasing environment achieved through design standards and preservation of natural beauty, improved transportation alternatives and more pedestrian friendly development, conservation of our natural environment and increased landscaping, more diversity in businesses and services that lead to strong economic development, more housing variety, and unity within the city and surrounding communities, governments, and businesses. The City Comprehensive Plan serves as the channel for making our visions a reality that will keep the City of Liberty Lake, "Spokane County's Premier Address" and a great place to live, work, and play!

The City of Liberty Lake Comprehensive Plan was developed through a yearlong, "bottom up" effort. The public was involved early in the process and continuous public participation and comments were sought



throughout via Planning Commission meetings, a public survey, information guides, workshops, and public hearings. At the initial startup of the City of Liberty Lake it was recommended to and approved by the City Council to adopt by reference the Spokane County pre-GMA Comprehensive Plan and the Spokane County 1998 Zoning Code to maintain the status quo

until the City adopted its own Comprehensive Plan and Implementation Regulations. The new City Comprehensive Plan is based on the City's Vision Statement and is intended to provide guidance for public and private decision makers who will be responsible for the future of the City of Liberty Lake in the next 20 years. The comprehensive plan is the centerpiece of our local planning. Implementation regulations must be consistent with the comprehensive plan and agencies are required to comply with the City's comprehensive plan and implementation regulations.



What are the elements of the City of Liberty Lake Comprehensive Plan and how were they developed?

The comprehensive plan is based on the City's Vision Statement that was adopted in the summer of 2001. That vision statement is as follows:



"The Liberty Lake community will maintain an environment that preserves and enhances natural surroundings through the harmony of planned architectural design and green space. Our community will achieve its quality of life by creating a safe, friendly environment in which community involvement promotes recreational opportunities and civic pride. Liberty Lake encourages and supports leading edge technology and a progressive business environment, which ensures a diverse, prosperous, and financially secure community."

In the summer of 2002, the City Planning Commission held four workshops and a public hearing to discuss two topics. The first topic was the development of element vision statements that supported the overall City vision and would be used to aid in the development of the City's comprehensive plan goals and policies. The second topic was the establishment of an Interim Urban Growth Area boundary (IUGA). A survey was also available at the workshops and the hearing for citizens to comment on various services, employment, housing, and other issues affecting the City and surrounding areas. A large amount of public input was received at the workshops and the public hearing on both of the topics. From this process, the element vision statements were drafted and IUGA scenarios for the City were proposed. The element vision statements and the IUGA scenario recommendations were then forwarded to the City Council by the Planning Commission for their review.



In September 2002, the City Council, after a final public hearing, approved comprehensive plan element vision statements that were used to guide the development of the comprehensive plan goals & policies. Throughout the development process slight additions or modifications were made and the final element vision statements are as follows:

Land Use

- Upon request and voter approval by area residents, potential inclusion of the areas surrounding the city into the City of Liberty Lake
- Encourage the use of a town design plan for future development

Urban Design / Community Character

- Clearly defined design standards
- Encourage the use of a town design plan for future development
- Pedestrian friendly commercial developments
- Preserve natural beauty
- Promote unity within the city and surrounding communities, governments, and businesses

Transportation

- Improved freeway access and interchanges
- Light rail terminal with ancillary businesses nearby
- Spacious, well-planned traffic corridors
- Expansion of the current pedestrian friendly trail system

Housing

- Low, Middle, and High density housing to accommodate varying lifestyles, income levels, and age groups

Utilities

- Adequate water supply and sewer services to accommodate growth
- Increased promotion of technology infrastructure

Economic Development

- Encourage diversity in businesses, variety in shopping, full-service restaurants, as well as the light industry, tech sector, and service-oriented business we have already
- Light rail terminal with ancillary businesses nearby
- Regional business development center
- Promote unity within the city and surrounding communities, governments, and businesses

Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

- Additional parks, possibly one by the Spokane River
- Additional trees and preserved natural beauty
- Expansion of the current pedestrian friendly trail system
- Inclusion of existing golf courses and other recreational opportunities within the City
- City community center
- Additional community access to Liberty Lake

Natural Environment

- Preserve the water quality, beauty, and ecosystem of all bodies of water within or adjoining the City including Liberty Lake and the Spokane River
- Conserve environmentally sensitive areas
- Preserve natural beauty

Cultural & Historical Resources

- Libraries, movie theaters, performing arts center, pedestrian-friendly area with nearby restaurants, fountains, park-like areas
- City community center
- Incorporate historical Liberty Lake symbols, designs, etc. within the built environment
- Promote unity within the city and surrounding communities, governments, and businesses

Community & Human Services

- Libraries, movie theaters, performing arts center, pedestrian-friendly area with nearby restaurants, fountains, park-like areas
- City community center
- Quality medical facilities
- Promote unity within the city and surrounding communities, governments, and businesses

Essential Public Facilities

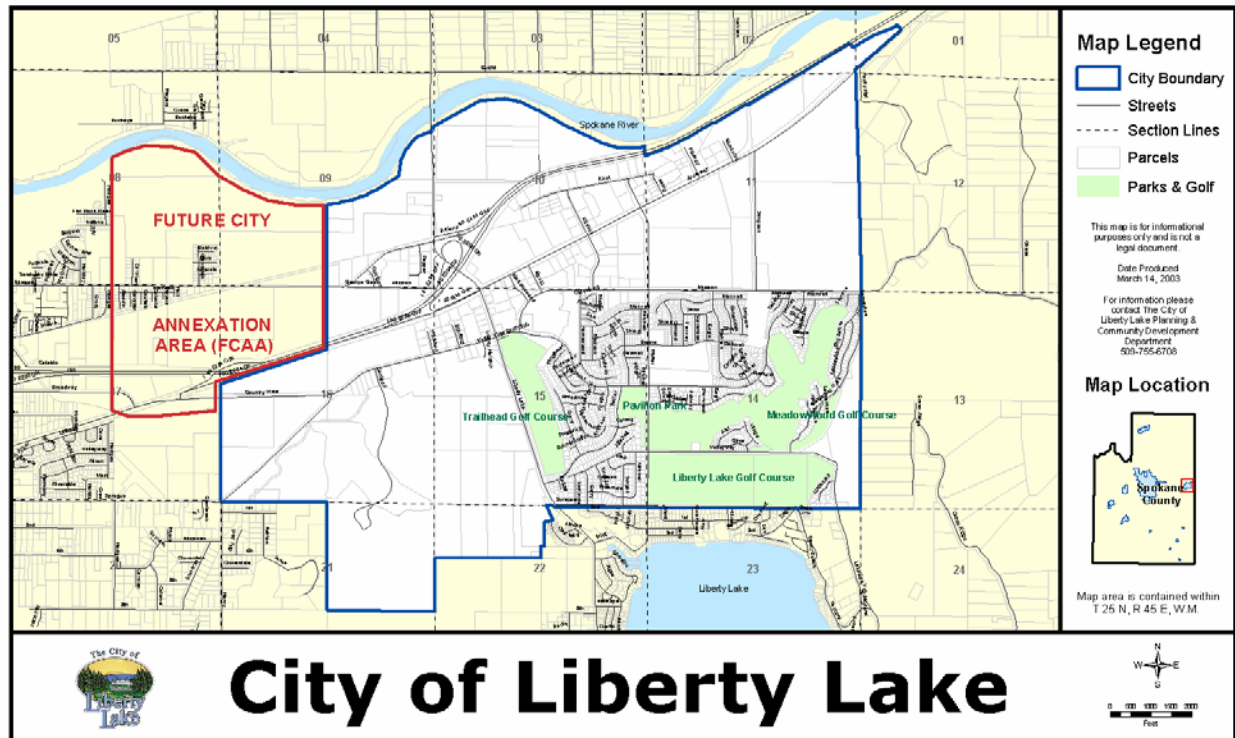
- Provide adequate school facilities for grades K-12 within the City that meet existing and future needs
- Additional elementary school(s)
- Middle school planned adjacent to present elementary school
- A high school
- Satellite college campus

Capital Facilities

- A fire station, post office, and library closer to the center of the city, a city hall, maintenance facility complex, and an expansion of the wastewater treatment plant.
- Regional business development center

The City Council also held a final hearing on the establishment of an Interim Urban Growth Area boundary (IUGA). Three IUGA scenarios had been presented to the public at the Planning Commission workshops and hearing in the summer of 2002. After extensive public input, the City Council approved the Planning Commission's recommendation of Scenario "A", the existing, status quo scenario. The City will be planning for the area within our current City limits and a Future City Annexation Area (FCAA), located to the northwest of the City limits, which is already contained within the Spokane County UGA. The FCAA will be considered a joint planning area with Spokane County.

MAP 1.1 - CITY OF LIBERTY LAKE BOUNDARY W/ FCAA



From the Fall of 2002 through the Spring of 2003, workshops were held for each of the thirteen comprehensive plan elements listed above. The City has incorporated mandatory and optional elements into the comprehensive plan. Additionally, the City has incorporated Plan Implementation and Performance Measurement into the appendix. Within each element is an introduction, history, and background, and the element goals and policies. The goals outlined within this plan establish the direction of the City and the policies establish the specifics of how to achieve the goals. At the end of May 2003 a Planning Commission workshop was held, followed by a public hearing to present the final Comprehensive Plan draft. The final draft was then forwarded to the City Council for an additional public hearing and adoption in the summer of 2003, after agency review.

The Comprehensive Plan goals and policies outline the City's future and implementation makes it happen. Implementation regulations will include the new zoning code, development regulations, and design standards that will be prepared to support this Comprehensive Plan. According to the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the new comprehensive plan must also go through a non-project environmental review and a threshold determination must be made. The City is adopting the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement prepared in November of 2000. The City

was included within the study area at the time of the SEIS's development, and based upon the information contained within the SEIS, the Comprehensive Plan was issued a Determination of Non-Significance. The public had the opportunity to comment on the SEPA determination during a workshop for the entire draft Comprehensive Plan that was held May 29, 2003.

Planning is an ongoing process, and improved data or changing circumstances will require amendment to the comprehensive plan. The City's vision statement and supporting element vision statements provide long-range guidance for the City. As specific element goals or policies are achieved, revisions of the plan may be required to continue progress toward the overall vision and goals. Amendments to the plan can be requested by the City Council, Planning Commission, City Staff, or by any affected citizen on a yearly basis. The Planning Commission shall review the proposed comprehensive plan amendment and hold a public hearing to solicit comment. After further review a formal recommendation will be made to the City Council for approval or denial. The City Council will hold an additional public hearing, make modifications if necessary, and approve or deny the proposed amendment to the comprehensive plan. By reviewing and updating the plan on a regular basis, the City of Liberty Lake can rely on this document in decision making, and can maintain public interest and support of the planning process.

The City of Liberty Lake has been the fastest growing area in Spokane County over the last decade. The 2002 population of the City was 4,480 and the new City Comprehensive Plan has been developed with an estimated population of approximately 15,000 being planned for in the next 20 years. Figure 1.1 represents the growth comparisons between the cities within Spokane County.

FIGURE 1.1 - GROWTH COMPARISON

| | 1990 | 2000 | 2002 | Population Chg. 1990-2002 | % Chg. | % of Total Growth | Avg. Annual Growth | Avg. Annual % Growth |
|---------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Spokane County | 361,333 | 417,939 | 425,600 | 64,267 | 17.8% | 100% | 5356 | 1.4% |
| Unincorporated | 165,443 | 199,019 | 201,453 | 36,010 | 21.8% | 56.0% | 3001 | 1.7% |
| Incorporated | 195,890 | 218,920 | 224,147 | 28,257 | 14.4% | 44.0% | 2355 | 1.2% |
| Airway Heights | 1,971 | 4,500 | 4,565 | 2,594 | 131.6% | 4.0% | 216 | 7.3% |
| Cheney | 7,723 | 8,832 | 9,305 | 1,582 | 20.5% | 2.5% | 132 | 1.6% |
| Deer Park | 2,278 | 3,017 | 3,045 | 767 | 33.7% | 1.2% | 64 | 1.7% |
| Fairfield | 516 | 494 | 590 | 74 | 14.3% | 0.1% | 6 | 2.5% |
| Latah | 203 | 202 | 200 | -3 | -1.5% | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Liberty Lake | 600 | 3,265 | 4,480 | 3,880 | 646.7% | 6.0% | 323 | 17.7% |
| Medical Lake | 3,664 | 3,815 | 3,885 | 221 | 6.0% | 0.3% | 18 | 0.5% |
| Millwood | 1,559 | 1,649 | 1,655 | 96 | 6.2% | 0.1% | 8 | 0.5% |
| Rockford | 481 | 413 | 500 | 19 | 4.0% | 0.0% | 2 | 0.3% |
| Spangle | 229 | 240 | 290 | 61 | 26.6% | 0.1% | 5 | 2.0% |
| Spokane | 177,165 | 195,629 | 195,500 | 18,335 | 10.3% | 28.5% | 1528 | 0.8% |
| Waverly | 101 | 129 | 132 | 31 | 30.7% | 0.0% | 3 | 2.3% |

Source: Planning & Community Development Department

